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SUBJECT: TURKIC COUNCIL ESTABLISHED; KAZAKHSTAN THE PRIZE

REF: A. ANKARA 1566

[B.](#) 08 ANKARA 89

Classified By: POL Counselor Daniel O'Grady, for reasons 1.4(b,d)

[11.](#) (SBU) Summary: Turkey has renewed its effort to consolidate its influence among the Turkic countries to its east with a new approach toward its neighbors. Two recent developments point to the initial success of this new posture. During the October 2-3 Turkic Summit in Nakhcivan, Turkey joined Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan in establishing the "Turkic-Speaking Countries Cooperation Council." Following this, Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev visited Turkey with a delegation of six ministers and 100 businessmen, and concluded the visit with a bilateral strategic partnership agreement. End Summary.

Revised Approach to the East

[12.](#) (C) On October 27 MFA Chief of South Asia Department Yonca Sunel discussed with us Turkey's new approach toward the other Turkic countries and the new "Turkic-Speaking Countries Cooperation Council." She also briefed us on Kazakh President Nazarbayev's visit to Turkey. After the fall of the Soviet Union, she said, Turkey had based its outreach to the former Soviet Turkic countries on a "big brother" mentoring approach, acting as an advocate and somewhat overbearing guide to the newly independent Turkic states to its east. However, those states, according to Sunel, resented Turkey's perceived high-handedness and reacted unenthusiastically. With President Gul taking an active role in promoting Turkey's foreign relations, and with a new Foreign Minister, the GOT has reconsidered how it approaches relations with its Turkic neighbors (REF B). Sunel told us the MFA is applying a new strategy for relations with the other Turkic countries -- one of "equal partners," which the MFA hopes will be more well-received than its previous attempt. (Note: According to Sunel, although this the official approach, Turkey still sees itself as a guide and leader for the other "developing" Turkic countries. End Note)

New Turkic Council

[13.](#) (C) This new "equal partner" strategy already seems to be paying off. For years, Turkey tried to institutionalize the "Turkic Summit" which it founded in 1992, without success. However, with its revised attitude toward the Turkic countries, this aspiration seems to have been realized at the October 2-3 Nakhchivan Turkic Summit. During this summit,

the leaders of all participating countries -- Turkey, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan -- approved and ratified an agreement to establish the "Turkic-Speaking Countries Cooperation Council" or "Turkic Council." The aim of the council is to institutionalize cooperation, solidarity and policy coordination of the Turkic Countries. The council will focus on economic and energy cooperation, and will be a forum for policy coordination discussions on regional issues such as Afghanistan.

¶4. (SBU) The Turkic Council will contain four sub-councils and will establish routine meetings at the presidential, foreign minister, and "high-ranking bureaucrat and advisor" levels. Within the Council there will be a Foreign Minister's Council, a Senior Official's Council, and a "Wise Men" Delegation. The establishing agreement specifies that heads of state will meet once a year formally, and once a year unofficially. The permanent secretariat will be located in Istanbul. The next meeting is planned for Bishkek next autumn, after the council is fully up and running.

¶5. (SBU) There were two other pre-existing Turkic fora that will now be placed under the jurisdiction of the Turkic Council. One is the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-Speaking Countries (TurkPA), which was formally established during last year's Turkic-Speaking Parliament Summit in Istanbul. TurkPA headquarters will be located in Baku. The other is the Joint Administration of Turkic Culture and Arts (Turksoy), which since its establishment in 1993 organizes Turkic cultural activities. The member states also agreed to establish a new Turkic academy in Kazakhstan.

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Kazakhstan Prize

¶6. (C) Sunel said the MFA sees Kazakhstan as the most powerful Turkic country with the highest potential for the future. Since Turkey is positioning itself to become a major energy transit country, it is paying close attention to Kazakhstan's fossil fuel resources (REF A). Kazakhstan possesses large oil and gas reserves and analysts predict that it will likely become one of the top 10 oil producing nations in the near future. Turkey has had a negative trade balance with Kazakhstan for years, but sees possibilities for export growth, as Kazakhstan's economy grew by 8.5 percent in **¶2007**. Compared with the other Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan is clearly the largest Turkish trading partner. Turkey's bilateral trade with Kazakhstan in 2008 was \$3.1 billion, compared to \$1.05 billion with Turkmenistan, \$918 million with Uzbekistan and \$324 million with Tajikistan. Kazakhstan exports to Turkey are mainly raw materials such as copper, zinc, oil and iron -- as such, the global fall in commodity prices had a drastic impact on bilateral trade in **¶2009**. Through September, total trade was only \$1.2 billion, and Kazakh exports had declined an astonishing 62.6 percent. In contrast, bilateral trade with other Turkic economies actually increased slightly despite the crisis. As global prices recover and internal Turkish demand increases, Kazakhstan should resume its leading role. The GOT also likely sees potential for the already high number of Kazakh tourists (135,000 in 2006) to increase. The MFA characterizes Turkey as "one of the best destinations for Kazakh tourists."

Nazarbayev Promotes Bilateral Relations

¶7. (SBU) Sunel told us that Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev's visit was positive and productive. The two countries signed a bilateral strategic partnership agreement as well as cooperation agreements on trade, tourism, and the environment. Nazarbayev came with a delegation of six ministers plus around 100 Kazakh businessmen. In Istanbul, the businessmen participated in a forum that promoted

increased bilateral business relations and investment in Turkey. During Nazarbayev's speech to the Turkish Parliament, he said Kazakhstan may join the Samsun-Ceyhan pipeline.

JEFFREY

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